

RANGE MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

POLICY FOCUS GROUP

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

Meeting held by teleconference on Wednesday, March 16, 2011
Resources Building, 1416 9th Street, 14th floor, State Parks Conference Room 1412
Sacramento, California

Attending:

RMAC:

Lesa Osterholm
Bart Cremers
Mel Thompson
Ed Anchordoguy
Marc Horney
Scott Carnegie

Representing:

California Farm Bureau Federation
California Farm Bureau Federation
California Wool Growers Association
California Wool Growers Association (by phone)
General Public (by phone)
California Forestry Association

Eric Huff (staff)

California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection

Agencies and Public:

Representing:

Noelle Cremers

California Farm Bureau Federation

~ Items appear in the order in which they were discussed by the Committee ~

Item 1: Call to Order and Introductions

RMAC Vice-Chair Carnegie called the meeting to order following introductions of meeting participants.

Member Thompson was then invited to present his paper on improving RMAC's effectiveness in its deliberations on issues. The Members discussed the recommendations in the paper and generally concurred with the objective of improving focus and clarity toward measurable meeting outcomes.

The discussion then turned to Member Thompson's suggestion that perhaps the RMAC Strategic Plan should be revised in accordance with the recommendations in his paper. He also indicated his willingness to serve as Chair of this Focus Group.

Item 2: Development and Discussion of Committee and Focus Group Priorities for 2011.

Vice-Chair Carnegie introduced the topic and summarized for the benefit of new Members the process of Focus Group priority development. Member Thompson explained his perspective that RMAC needs to raise the Board's focus on rangeland issues. Focus Group priorities, and in particular the Policy Focus Group's priorities, should support this desired outcome.

1 Staff suggested that perhaps the Policy Focus Group could develop a “range policy
2 initiative” to help direct the Board’s efforts in support of rangeland constituents.
3

4 Member Thompson led further discussion of possible priorities and solicited input from the
5 Members. The Members then concurred on a process for collating the various Focus
6 Groups’ respective priorities for incorporation into the Board’s “Priorities Report.”
7

8 **Item 3: Public Comment.**
9

10 No public comment was offered.
11

12 The meeting was adjourned by consensus of the Focus Group participants.
13

14
15 ###
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50

RANGE MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

RANGELANDS FOCUS GROUP

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

Meeting held by teleconference on Wednesday, March 16, 2011
Resources Building, 1416 9th Street, 14th floor, State Parks Conference Room 1412
Sacramento, California

Attending:

RMAC:

Lesa Osterholm
Bart Cremers, (FG Chair)
Mel Thompson
Ed Anchordoguy
Marc Horney
Scott Carnegie
Chuck Pritchard

Representing:

California Farm Bureau Federation
California Farm Bureau Federation
California Wool Growers Association
California Wool Growers Association (by phone)
General Public (by phone)
California Forestry Association
California Association of Resource Conservation Districts
(by phone)

Eric Huff (staff) California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection

Agencies and Public:

Noelle Cremers
Devon Jones
John Gamper

Representing:

California Farm Bureau Federation
Mendocino County Farm Bureau
California Farm Bureau Federation (by phone)

~ Items appear in the order in which they were discussed by the Committee ~

Item 1: Call to Order and Introductions

Focus Group Chair Cremers called the meeting to order following introductions of meeting participants.

Item 2: Status Report on Legislation to Partially Restore Williamson Act Subvention Funding for Local Governments. John Gamper, California Farm Bureau Federation.

Mr. John Gamper provided a detailed summary of the efforts to achieve passage of a state budget that would restore funding for the Williamson Act subvention program. Two legislative budget subcommittees from the Assembly and Senate, respectively, expressed their strong support for Williamson Act funding provisions in the state budget. When the subcommittee recommendations went to the full budget committees of the two legislative houses, they were rejected in favor of continued cuts to the subvention funding following the lead of Governor Brown's Office. Once again, the program was used as a pawn in the recurrent budget battle between political parties.

1 Mr. Gamper went on to describe next steps in the effort and responded to questions from
2 Member Pritchard.

3
4 Chair Cremers suggested that this is an issue well above RMAC's ability to influence, but
5 that future updates could still be useful. Member Thompson questioned whether or not
6 there could be utility in RMAC choosing to view the Williamson Act as dead and working
7 toward new alternatives to it. He noted that there are other groups beginning to examine
8 alternatives to continuation of the Act. This prompted considerable discussion on the future
9 of the program and efforts by local jurisdictions to address the absence of funding.

10
11 **Item 3: New and Unfinished**

- 12
13 - **Report on Carrizo Plain grazing issue:** Member Pritchard reported on a letter
14 from a coalition of organizations responding to what is essentially a shutdown of
15 cattle grazing on the Chimineas Ranch on the Carrizo Plain in eastern San Luis
16 Obispo County. He recounted the history behind the letter and noted that this is an
17 example of a situation that could have benefitted from a public/private partnership to
18 support managed grazing.
- 19
20 - **Update on outreach efforts to local agricultural organizations for financial**
21 **support of college and university range education programs:** Members'
22 Horney and Pritchard reported that there has been little interest from local
23 agricultural organizations to provide financial support for range education programs.
24 They suggested that the next step is to reach out to state agricultural organizations.
25 Members' Horney and Pritchard will continue to work on this task.
- 26
27 - **Update on status of Certified Rangeland Manager Program Guidelines**
28 **revision:** staff provided a brief update on the guidelines revision effort along with an
29 explanation of the process for the Board's adoption of revised program regulations.
30

31 **Item 4: Public Comment.**

32
33 No public comment was offered.

34
35 The meeting was adjourned by consensus of the Focus Group participants.

36
37
38 ###
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50

RANGE MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

VEGETATION MANAGEMENT FOCUS GROUP

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

Meeting held by teleconference on Wednesday, March 16, 2011
Resources Building, 1416 9th Street, 14th floor, State Parks Conference Room 1412
Sacramento, California

Attending:

RMAC:

Lesa Osterholm
Bart Cremers
Mel Thompson
Ed Anchordoguy
Marc Horney
Scott Carnegie, (FG Chair)

Representing:

California Farm Bureau Federation
California Farm Bureau Federation
California Wool Growers Association
California Wool Growers Association (by phone)
General Public (by phone)
California Forestry Association

Eric Huff (staff)

California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection

Agencies and Public:

Phyllis Banducci
Doug Wickizer

Representing:

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection-OSFM
Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

~ Items appear in the order in which they were discussed by the Committee ~

Item 1: Call to Order and Introductions

Focus Group Chairman Carnegie called the meeting to order following introductions of meeting participants.

Item 2: Status Report on Implementation of 2010 Strategic Fire Plan.

Ms. Phyllis Banducci, Staff Chief in charge of the State's Strategic Fire Plan implementation provided a PowerPoint presentation on the development of the Fire Plan and the status of implementation (a copy of this presentation is available upon request). Ms. Banducci noted that the Plan was adopted by the Board in June 2010 and includes broad goals, objectives, and a framework for implementation. The Plan emphasizes inter-agency cooperation and collaboration rather than focusing solely on Cal Fire's responsibilities for fire suppression on lands designated as State Responsibility Area (SRA). Seven goals are identified in the Plan along with benchmarks for performance evaluation. Each of the goals is meant to build on the previous one with suppression at the bottom of the list. Ms. Banducci reviewed each of the goals in order and explained in detail the implications of each. She highlighted goal number five pertaining to increasing the treatment of hazardous vegetative fuel treatment.

At the conclusion of her summary of the Fire Plan, she explained how implementation is to occur.

1 She began by describing the role of the various Cal Fire Units in reviewing the seven goals
2 and identifying two objectives to be achieved in each planning cycle. Ms. Banducci
3 anticipates that it will take two years to reach full Plan implementation. She then described
4 the role of the recently formed "Fire Plan Analysis Work Group" consisting of Cal Fire field
5 and Fire and Resource Assessment Program staff.
6

7 Ms. Banducci has provided the various Cal Fire Units with a standard template for
8 designing and reporting on their pre-fire planning activities such as creation of fuel breaks.
9 This template is comparable to the format of Community Wildfire Protection Plans
10 (CWPPs). In this way, Cal Fire can track the effectiveness of specific treatments in relation
11 to fire suppression activities. This also provides a mechanism for coordination with other
12 entities.
13

14 Ms. Banducci then concluded her presentation and responded to questions from the
15 Members.
16

17 **Item 3: Status Report on Draft Vegetation Treatment Program Environmental**
18 **Impact Report.**
19

20 Mr. Doug Wickizer, Coordinator of Cal Fire's efforts to draft a new Vegetation Treatment
21 Program Environmental Impact Report (VTP-EIR) began his report with the historical
22 background behind the current effort. The VTP-EIR has been under development for quite
23 some time. However, between 2006 and 2011, work was on hold due to the absence of
24 funding. This has been remedied and a contractor has been retained as of February 2011
25 to produce the EIR document. To bridge the gap between the initiation of the effort and the
26 restoration of funding, Cal Fire will be conducting two webinars to solicit public input. The
27 comment received in the webinars will be consolidated with the results of the original public
28 scoping sessions to comprehensively inform the drafting of the EIR document. The initial
29 draft document will not likely be circulated to the public until the fall of next year. The goal is
30 to have the final document certified by the Board in April 2012, but this is dependent upon a
31 number of variables.
32

33 Mr. Wickizer concluded his status report on the VTP-EIR and announced that the California
34 Biomass Collaborative Annual Conference is to be held April 5-9 in Davis. He invited the
35 Members to participate in this conference.
36

37 **Item 4: Public Comment.**
38

39 No public comment was offered.
40

41 The meeting was adjourned by consensus of the Focus Group participants.
42
43

44 ###
45
46
47
48
49
50

1 **RANGE MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

2
3 **WATER FOCUS GROUP**

4
5 **DRAFT MEETING MINUTES**

6
7 Meeting held by teleconference on Wednesday, March 16, 2011
8 Resources Building, 1416 9th Street, 14th floor, State Parks Conference Room 1412
9 Sacramento, California

10
11 **Attending:**

12
13 **RMAC:**

14
15 Lesa Osterholm
16 Bart Cremers
17 Mel Thompson
18 Ed Anchordoguy
19 Marc Horney, (FG Chair)
20 Scott Carnegie

21 **Representing:**

22 California Farm Bureau Federation
23 California Farm Bureau Federation
24 California Wool Growers Association
25 California Wool Growers Association (by phone)
26 General Public (by phone)
27 California Forestry Association

28 Eric Huff (staff)

29 California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection

30
31 **Agencies and Public:**

32 **Representing:**

33
34 Noelle Cremers
35 Devon Jones
36 Ben Zabinsky

37 California Farm Bureau Federation
38 Mendocino County Farm Bureau
39 North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (by
40 phone)

41
42 *~ Items appear in the order in which they were discussed by the Committee ~*

43 **Item 1: Call to Order and Introductions**

44 Focus Group Chair Horney called the meeting to order following introductions of meeting
45 participants.

46
47 **Item 2: Presentation on Rangeland Water Quality Short Course Program, University
48 of California.**

49 Focus Group Chair Horney reported that Mr. Mel George of UC Extension was not able to
50 make the meeting to present on this topic. He is working with Mr. George to either draft a
51 written summary of the program or provide a report to the Focus Group in person. Member
Cremers noted that there was a lengthy article on the subject in the February 2011 issue of
Rangelands magazine that was written by Mr. George among others. Chair Horney
indicated that he would forward a copy of this article to the Members.

Member Thompson indicated that he would like to know how the State Water Resources
Control Board views the program. The State Water Board's perspective on the program is
currently unclear.

1 **Item 3: Status Report on Development of Draft Klamath Basin Water Quality**
2 **Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements for Grazing and Irrigated Agriculture.**
3 **Mr. Ben Zabinsky, North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board.**
4

5 Mr. Zabinsky reported that the State Water Board would like to develop a statewide
6 coordinated waiver process for grazing lands. Region 6, the Lahontan Regional Board has
7 been designated to head up this effort and Mr. Zabinsky will serve as the Region 1 contact.
8 Ms. Cindy Wise will be serving as the coordinator from the Lahontan Regional Board and
9 Mr. Zabinsky has informed her of RMAC's interest in the topic.

10
11 As a result of the State Water Board's statewide waiver effort for grazing lands, the North
12 Coast Regional Board has decided to scrap the Klamath waiver effort in favor of a region-
13 wide irrigated lands waiver process. It is unclear at this time whether or not there will be
14 overlap between irrigated and grazing lands in both the statewide and North Coast region
15 waiver processes.

16
17 Chair Horney inquired as to whether or not voluntary efforts for compliance with water
18 quality standards were still supported. Mr. Zabinsky replied that voluntary compliance
19 programs were muted by the State Water Board's enactment of the "Nonpoint Source
20 Policy" in 2004.

21
22 Ms. Devon Jones of the Mendocino County Farm Bureau questioned Mr. Zabinsky as to
23 whether or not there is a set timeframe for development of the statewide grazing waiver.
24 Mr. Zabinsky indicated that there was no set timeframe and that this effort would likely
25 extend beyond 2012. In response to a follow up question, Mr. Zabinsky indicated that
26 Region 1 would be following their meeting schedule and working timeline originally slated
27 for the Klamath region effort as they move forward with the development of their region-
28 wide irrigated lands waiver.

29
30 Chair Horney suggested that the Group invite a Lahontan Regional Board contact to a
31 future meeting. Mr. Zabinsky further suggested that the Group invite a contact from the San
32 Francisco Bay Regional Water Board to speak on the existing Tomales Bay waiver.

33
34 Member Thompson recounted RMAC's historical interactions with representatives of the
35 Lahontan Regional Water Board and State Water Board and expressed his concern about
36 future interactions. He went on to suggest a framework for RMAC's further work on this
37 topic.

38
39 **Item 4: Public Comment.**
40

41 No public comment was offered.
42

43 The meeting was adjourned by consensus of the Focus Group participants.
44
45

46 ###
47
48
49
50